Accountability Survey Analysis

Strategic Planning & Research Team

6/1/2017

Key Points

- Overall, respondents were generally supportive of aspects of the Accountability model, as articulated in this survey.
- Respondents expressed confusion regarding the differences between "rating" and "reporting", the dashboard functions, and the new "Kentucky Plus" diploma.
- There was disagreement among respondents over the degree to which different student groups should impact a school's rating.
- Areas of the Accountability model that garnered the highest levels of support included: promoting a well-rounded education, emphasize essential-skills for students; allowing students to demonstrate skills through multiple ways.

Below is an overview of respondent feedback from the Town Hall and online surveys.

Overall Results – Multiple Choice Questions
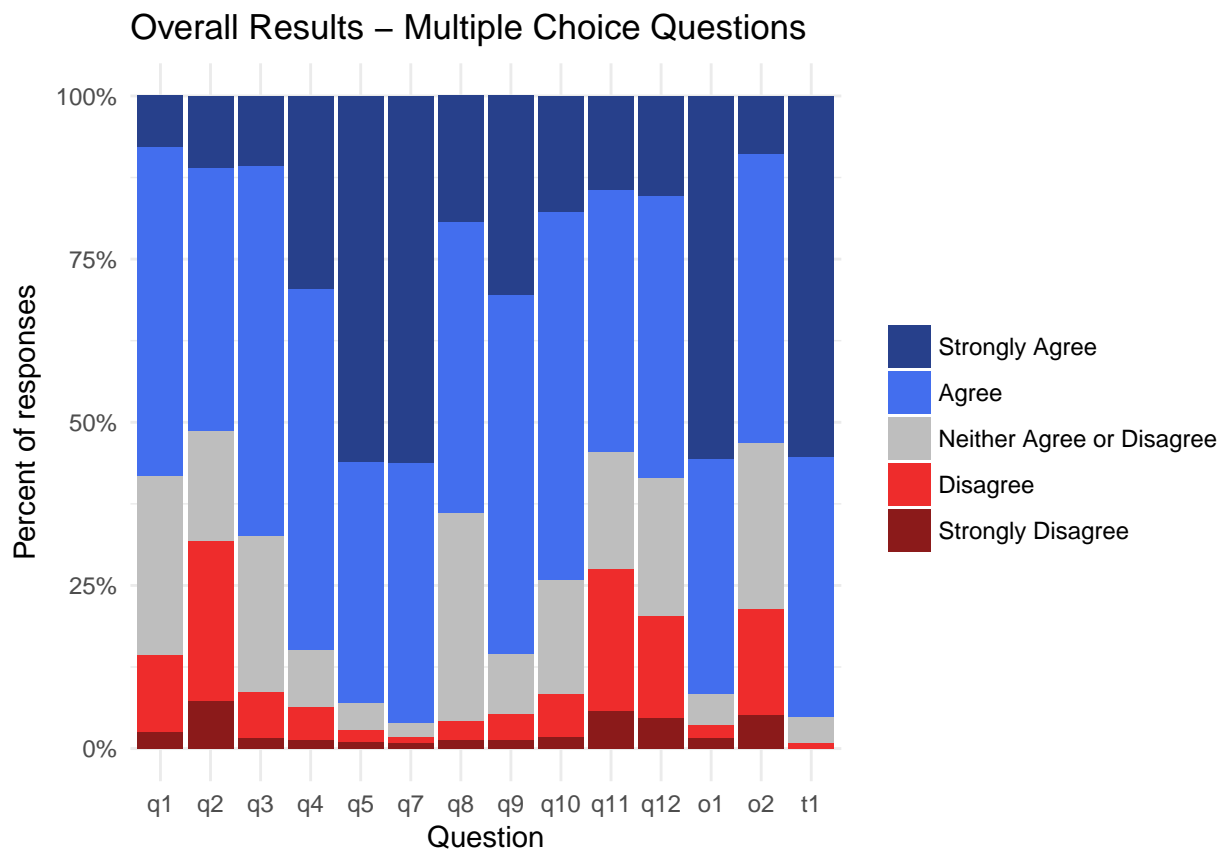
Question 1

The dashboard gauges communicate a simple, high level picture of school performance.

A majority of respondents thought that the dashboard concept provides a simple, approachable snapshot of the indicators. Some expressed difficulty with interpreting the meaning of the dashboard, suggesting that definitions should be provided as well as an opportunity to drill down into the data.

Question 1 – Multiple Choice Results
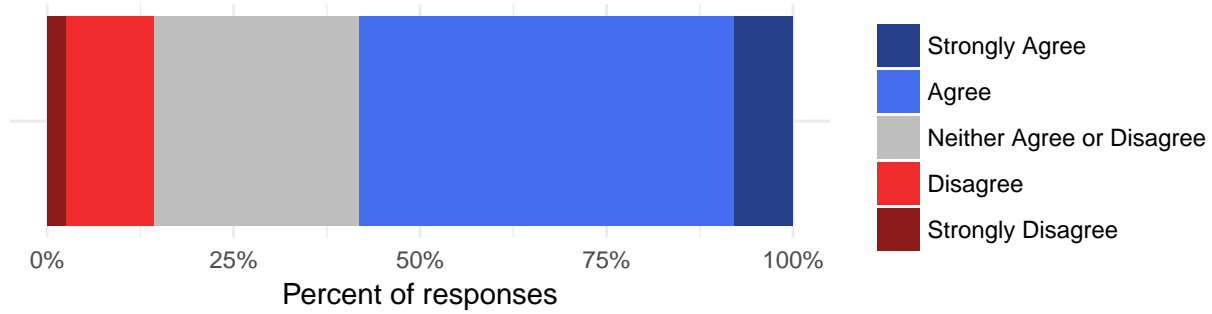
Teacher vs. Non–teacher Responses, Question 1
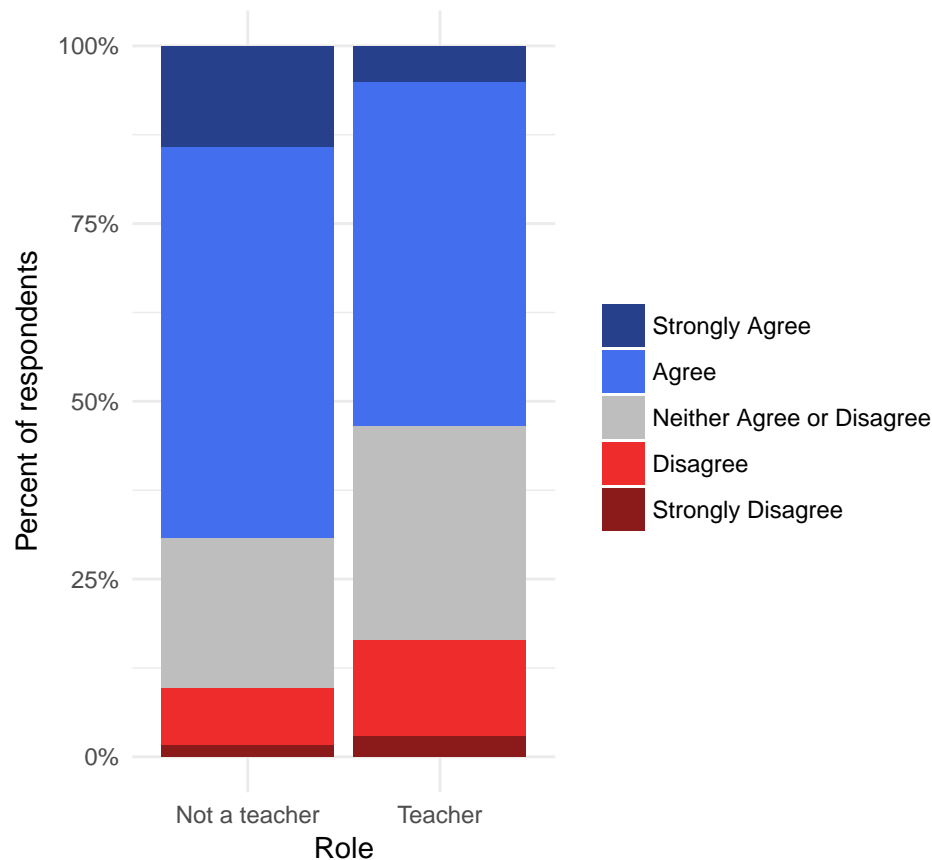
Comments from survey respondents:

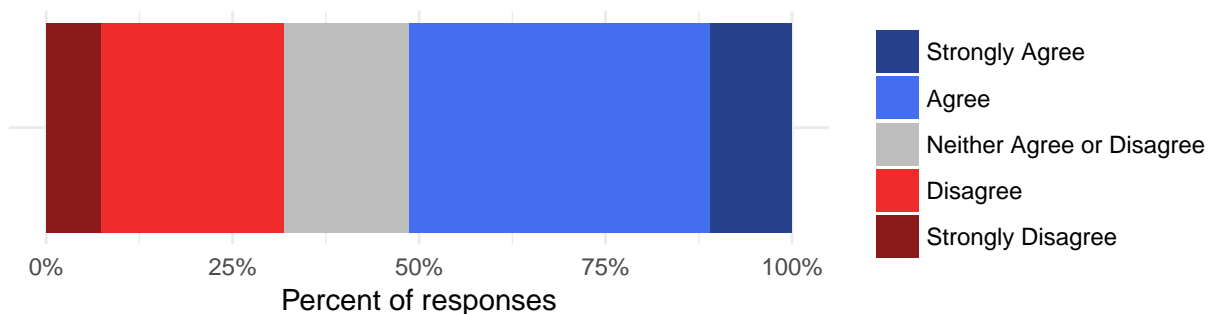- "Dashboard seems very user friendly for all stakeholders."

- "This is a quick and easy way to view a schools progress/standing, like checking the gauges of a vehicle or airplane."
- "Too busy. The page has too much going on. You need links to click onto each category and look at results individually."
- "This only gives a snapshot, not enough detail nor data for an accurate measures."
- "Not sure what the markers on the dashboard mean. For example, what does"Good" mean? Could there be a key perhaps?"
- "While the gauges can quickly convey the information from all accountability areas they could be quite confusing to someone who isn't familiar with the terms that are used. An additional narrative defining what each gauge means and what the school's specific score means would need to be included."
- "The gauges need to have drill down ability to the student level, and the student should be able to see their own gauges."
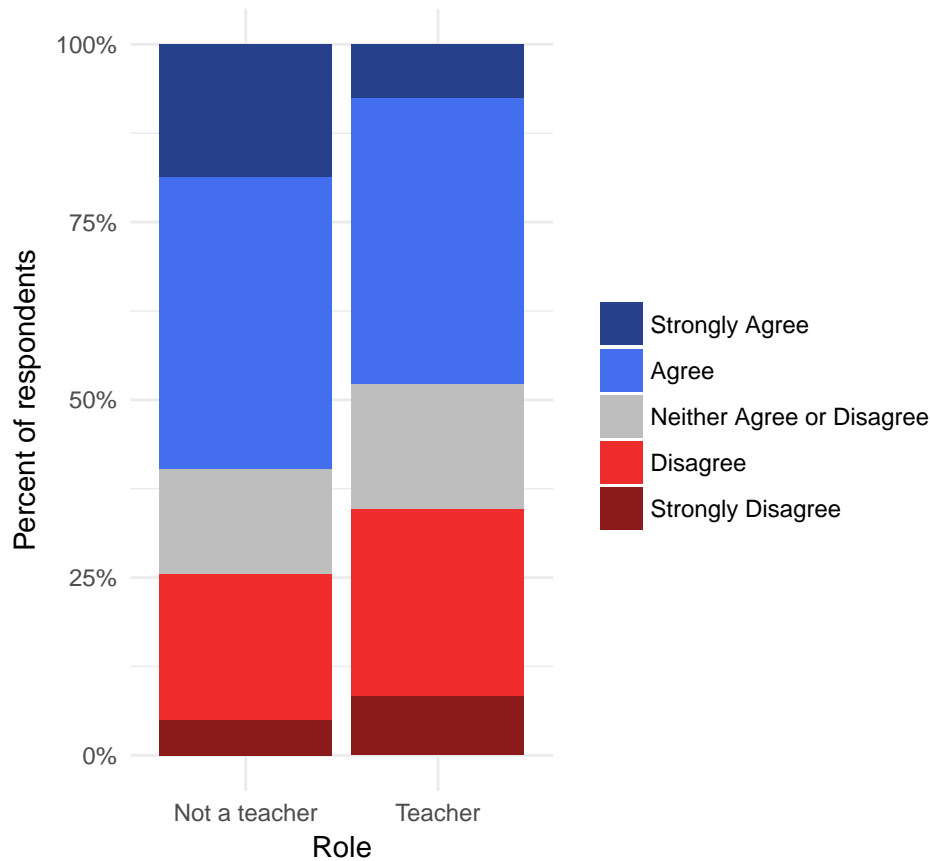
Question 2

A school that has a large gap or a student group that is underperforming and not making progress should not be able to earn the highest overall rating.

Slightly more than half of respondents agreed with the statement and it was the fourth most-commented question on the online survey. There is general agreement that schools have a responsibility to gap students, but some think that they shouldn't be punished for their underperformance. The impact of students with disabilities and English Learners was a particular concern, as well as the challenge of comparing schools with different demographics.

Question 2 – Multiple Choice Results

Percent of responses

Legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Teacher vs. Non–teacher Responses, Question 2

Percent of respondents

100%

75%

50%

25%

0%

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Not a teacher   Teacher

Role

Comments from survey respondents:

- "I think is should be balanced so that they are not put on a priority/focus list for one area. We have seen our ESL students always under-perform, however the new ACCESS testing as part of accountability may highlight the great work we do to move students to monitoring."
- "This component completely disregards the other positive aspects to a school's progress and is demeaning to the hard work that teachers do every single day. It is highly discouraging to those that are in the trenches every single day."
- "Sometimes it takes baby steps to make sure a system is not only workable but also usable by the parents and staff. Therefore those schools that have a large gap, or a certain group that is underperforming should not be in the same group as those that are not making any progress at all."
- "This would assist in the elimination of students being left behind or falling between the cracks. Some schools focus on improving test scores for a select few and students with less potential are challenged only enough to move them out of the low performing level rather than being challenged to attain high levels of achievement."
- "A student group that is under performing could be a group of special education students who do not"perform" or "grow" in the same way as their peers. This must be taken into consideration. A student can grow quite a bit and not change ratings in a subject. For instance, if he/she begins the year as a barely novice student and ends the year as a top novice student, he/she has grown and this may very well be a significant growth for the student. However, he/she is still "novice"."
- "While it is important to reach all students, it is not fair for an"underperforming group" to bring down the score of an entire school."
- "Schools that don't have minority gap groups or free/reduced lunch gal groups are going to automatically earn points since their gap groups don't exist. I don't think that schools that are economically and
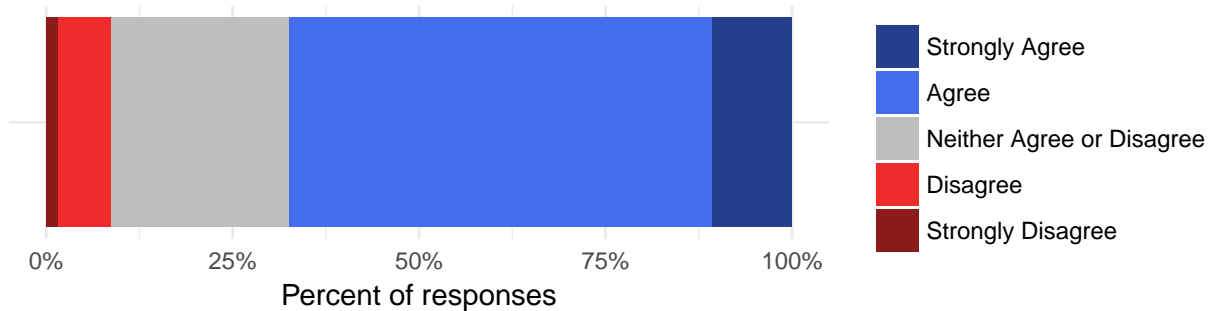
culturally diverse, and thus have a higher chance of having"gap groups" should be penalized."

Question 3

Kentuckians will be more informed by including both measures that are part of a school's accountability rating and measures that are reported only.

There is some general confusing between "reporting" and "rating" among respondents. Most agreed this information will be important to a variety of shareholders.

Question 3 – Multiple Choice Results

Percent of responses

Legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments from survey respondents:

- "It will likely be confusing and garner more questions if there the"reported only" measures are included. My question would be, "why are these measures NOT reported?" If they are important enough to measure, why are they not important enough to "count?" and, if they don't "count", why are they reported?"
- "The reported information may mean more to parents and communities."
- "When you overload a school with information/ feedback the intended message can get lost. Keep the measurement simple."
- "I love this feature."
- "It isn't clear to me that the"reported only" measures will be valid enough to be informative. If they're like the un-audited program reviews, they could be a net loss to understanding."

Question 4

It is critical to report how much students have the opportunity to participate in quality experiences and have access to school supports which impact their success.

Respondents agreed this is important, but that it will be very challenging to measure accurately. Comments on this item highlighted issues of equity and funding.

Question 4 – Multiple Choice Results
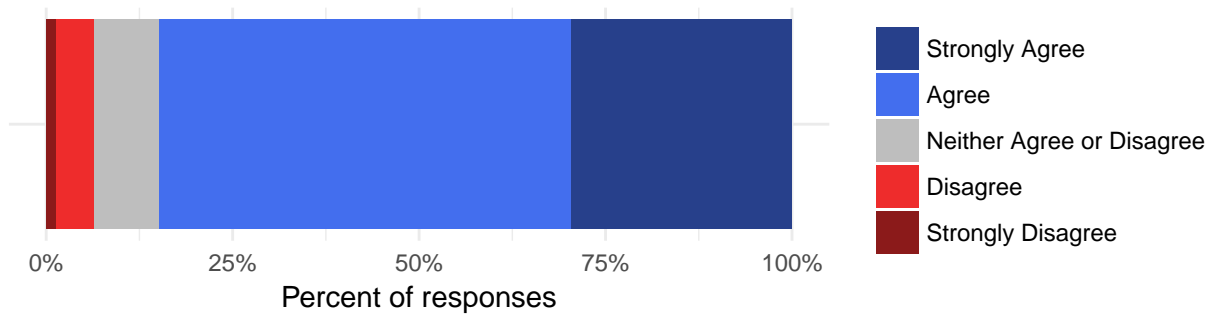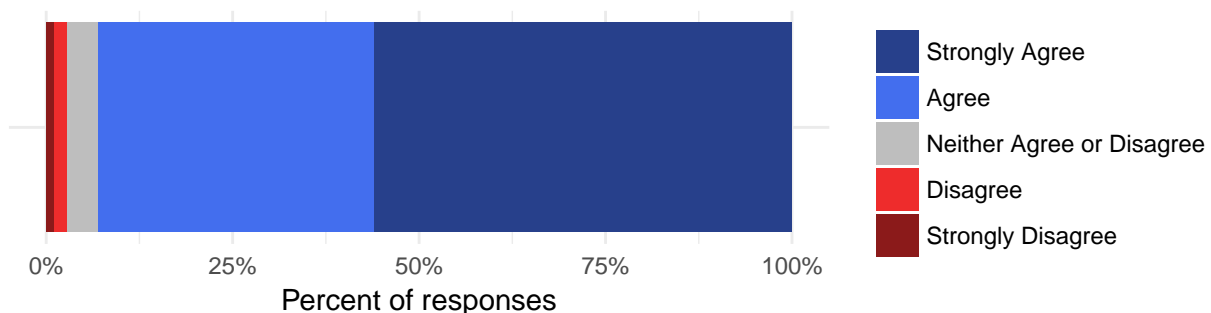

Comments from survey respondents:

- "The state needs access to that information. If it is reported to the public, there should also be significant explanations as to why students do or do not have the opportunity for experiences and access."
- "This is one thing that the Dashboard will not show, and one thing that small schools do a lot of that is underappreciated by KDE accountability. There is a lot of opportunities that schools do for their kids that would add to student success if the student and their family could see the value in what we were trying to do."
- "I agree, but the monitoring sounds cumbersome."
- "All schools are not created equal. In economically deprived areas many students do not have the same access to technology or to sufficient staffing in the core content areas. This will limit their access to supports which impact their success. It doesn't change the academic indicators and this is what the students and parents want to know."
- "Parents do need to know what opportunities exist. Very important."
- "The program reviews (although way too time consuming) did result in some positive changes in our elective offerings. I don't know how that will be maintained if it doesn't count towards the rating."
- "Very difficult to measure"
- "Schools should not be compared, because not all schools have equal opportunity."

Question 5

Schools should help prepare students with essential skills (i.e., responsibility, dependability).

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed with this item and it was the second-most commented question. There is a general belief that essential skills should be part of every classroom and that civics should be included in this conversation as well.

Question 5 – Multiple Choice Results
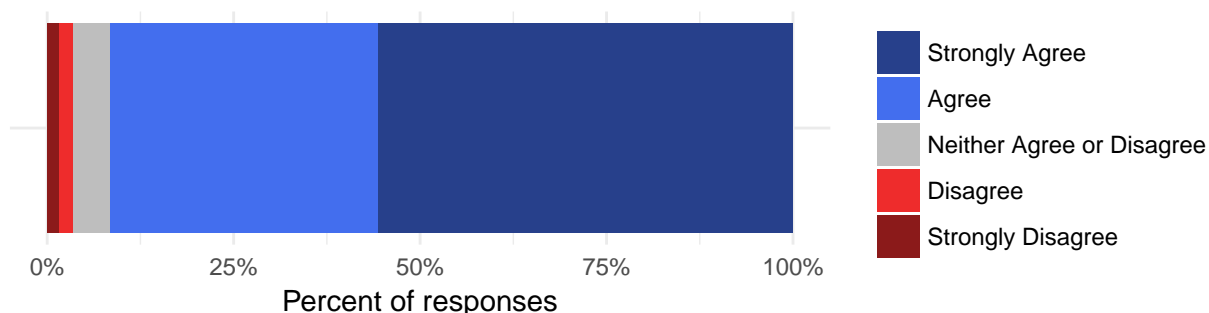

Comments from survey respondents:

- "Teaching Math, Reading, etc. and behavioral expectations (like responsibility, dependability, etc.) go hand in hand. You can't have one without the other."
- "This should be utilized not just in career and technical education classes, but should be enforced in every classroom in a school."
- "I think offering as well as ensuring that students have access to robust Civic education programs like We the People, Project Citizen, or KUNA would help achieve these goals."
- "We are the only place some students will ever learn these skills. These are the skills they will need when they try to get a job as an adult. There is not enough support for schools that are trying to teach these skills to the students."
- "I think we should always embed social skills in our instruction, but parents are the primary teachers. This is what is often missing from what we see today in many students. This component from parents is almost expected, but we must remember that we are also teaching content skills that must be mastered too."

Online-Only Question 1

High schools should help prepare students with essential skills (for example, attendance, responsibility and dependability).

This question, although only asked on the online form, generally mirrored the response to Question 5.

Question 1 – Multiple Choice Results
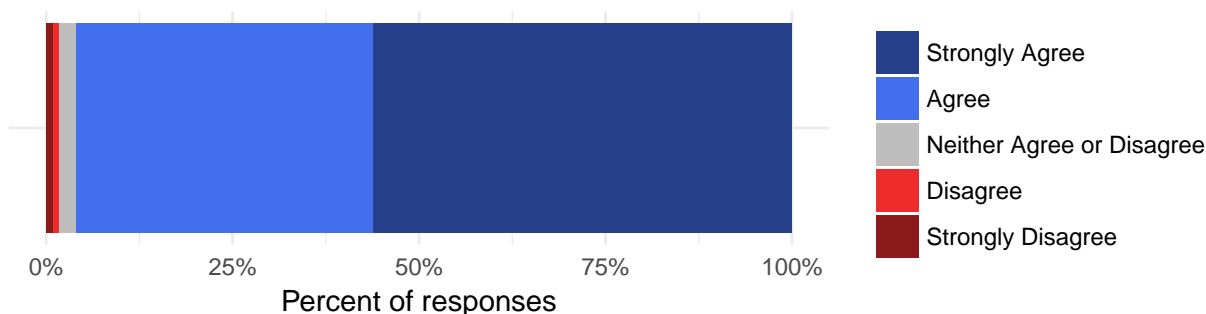

Comments from survey respondents:

- "Absolutely. Real world skills translate to better opportunities for all."
- "That is essential to a good workforce!"
- "It should be taken into account that many of our students are from homes with poverty and are lacking in these considerably."
- "Help being the key…schools cannot be the only source of this learning. Unfortunately, too many students have inadequate support structures outside of the school environment."
- "While we are encouraging student responsibility and dependability-we have absolutely no control over attendance. I realize this more than others because I work on the truancy committee at our school where we have meetings twice monthly with students and parents (who often don't show up) explaining the importance of coming to school, and the legal consequences if they do not. High schools absolutely do not need attendance put into the accountability-because there are no laws on the books that are enforced to help with the issue. (No teeth, so to speak). We've come a long way in Kentucky-but there are still many who do not value education as they should-and it is not just a rural issue. It's everywhere. Thank you."

Question 7

Allowing multiple ways (for example, tests, advanced coursework or dual credit) for students to demonstrate academic or technical readiness at high school is important and desirable.

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed with this statement. They are generally supportive of multiple pathways to demonstrate readiness at the high school level. They acknowledged that the needs of every child vary and that it is important for their high school experience to have connections to their future.

Question 7 – Multiple Choice Results

Percent of responses

Legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Comments from survey respondents:

- "It's a win-win situation."
- "It is important that as a state we challenge all kids. Yes, we must focus on those who are behind it those who are advanced deserve a program that challenges them too."
- "Students need more career-focused classes because the advanced coursework is embedded in the technical classes that provide the skills and training that are needed in the 21-century workforce."
- "Technical readiness is equally as important as college readiness. The world needs skilled laborers who DO NOT need a college degree. It makes sense to allow students to go to vocational schools, learn a trade, and be able to use that skill as a means to demonstrate that they are ready to enter the work force. That's as important as being ready to go to college, perhaps, more so, when you consider the alarming rate at which students go to college and never graduate.
- "Dual credit and AP courses are crucial to this as well as technical training at tech schools or within military programs."
- "One size does not fit all when it comes to education. Students have various talents, strengths and skill sets that can render them college and (or) career ready... We should be able to assess accordingly."
- "I do not believe that all students will go to college, some simply do not have the desire to do so. Technical/skill readiness is just as important. All students need to be ready to be a contributing member of society."
- "While I strongly agree with this statement, it is unwise and inefficient to require all students to take all assessments for accountability. For some students, the ACT is the most appropriate assessment to show achievement. For other students working toward different goals, the ASVAB or KOSSA is more appropriate."
- "Graduation portfolios and panel presentations garner the feedback students need and desire to be proficient at the next level, whether that be furthering their education in college or trades."

Question 8

Reporting additional credentials for students with a Kentucky Plus designation is positive.

A strong majority of respondents agreed with this item, but there was also a significant number of "neither agree or disagree" responses. Many were unclear about the new "Kentucky Plus" designation and wanted more information before they took a stance on it.

Question 8 – Multiple Choice Results

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

Percent of responses
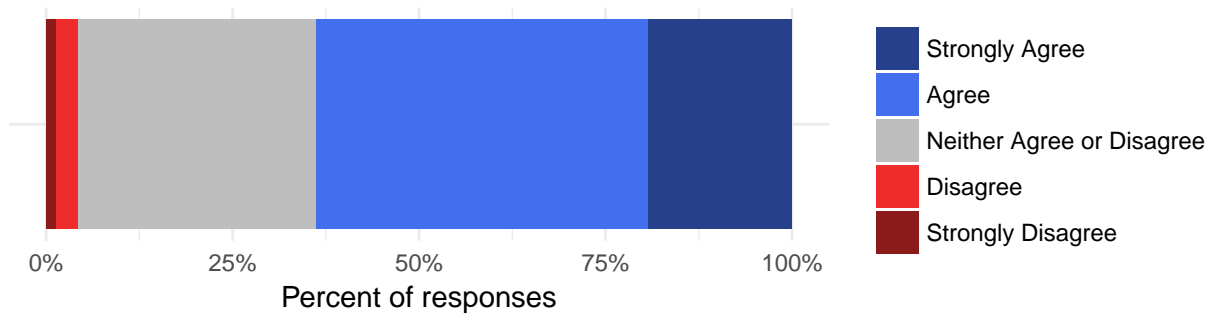
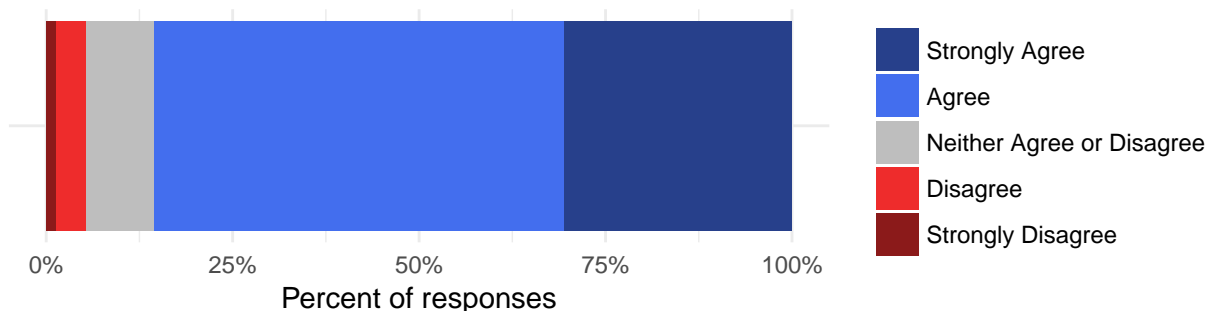Comments from survey respondents:

- "Who will recognize outside of KY? It is kind of like the Commonwealth Diploma?"
- "Do colleges care about this designation? Will colleges give extra credit or scholarships for this seal on the diploma? If not, who are we trying to impress."
- "Unless a student attends a Kentucky school of higher education, this will be meaningless. Of course, for those who do, this might be a good thing. . . ."
- "I'm not sure what KY Plus is. . . "
- "Strongly agree, as long as it's reasonable for school officials to tell if students met those expectations or not."
- "Positive. However this rarely goes to students from low socioeconomic status or multicultural status, because they do not have the support at home due to the fact that parents are constantly working."
- "While classifying students based on their achievement is remarkable, we have to remember that future employers and education institutions (GPA only) levels of achievement, but whether the student received a diploma. In other words, future employers could care less if a student received a bronze, silver or gold seal on their diploma."
- "Further segregates the"haves" from the "have nots" and the districts that house them."

Question 9

It is important for students to have personal growth targets toward proficiency.

A majority of respondents agreed with this statement. They also acknowledged that this can be a challenge to measure and some provided suggestions regarding the best way to measure growth.

Question 9 – Multiple Choice Results

Strongly Agree
Agree
Neither Agree or Disagree
Disagree
Strongly Disagree

Percent of responses

Comments from survey respondents:

- "Growth and Gap should be based on the individual student not comparing one group of 5th graders to the group the previous year. Points/scores should be based on individual students and how they perform. If a student grows from Novice to Apprentice that is growth and they should be rewarded."

- "As an adult/teacher, I can agree with this statement, but getting a high schooler to buy into it is another matter entirely. Students do not see the value in goals, especially as it pertains to academics. We are trying to change their minds, but at this age, it just doesn't matter to them. As long as they have a diploma and, for some, a"good enough" score to get into college, they don't care what their grade was."
- "I am in favor of SMART goals for students. Goal setting is a crucial life skill and gives the student a more concrete sense of purpose and direction where their academic performance is concerned."
- "Students have to have more stake in this than the teacher. Students should have to think and develop growth targets for themselves. This should not be a list to choose from provided from the teacher. The student should have to maintain this, and not add another clerical task to the teacher's responsibilities!"
- "Individual growth targets become arbitrary and holistic instead of based upon what is truly needed."
- "But I am concerned about how this would be measured. Currently, we don't know how growth is measured. Will it be a lexile? A percentage? Will distinguished students still have a growth target or just be required to maintain P/D? I think of all the components this is the most difficult to understand and needs clarity surrounding it."

Question 10

Growth should be reported at the school level based on students' individual growth grouped together for the school, according to whether students "catch up," "keep up," or "move up."

A majority of respondents agreed with this statement. They agree that growth should be a key part of the accountability system. Some expressed concerns regarding students with disabilities and the tests used to measure growth.

Question 10 – Multiple Choice Results
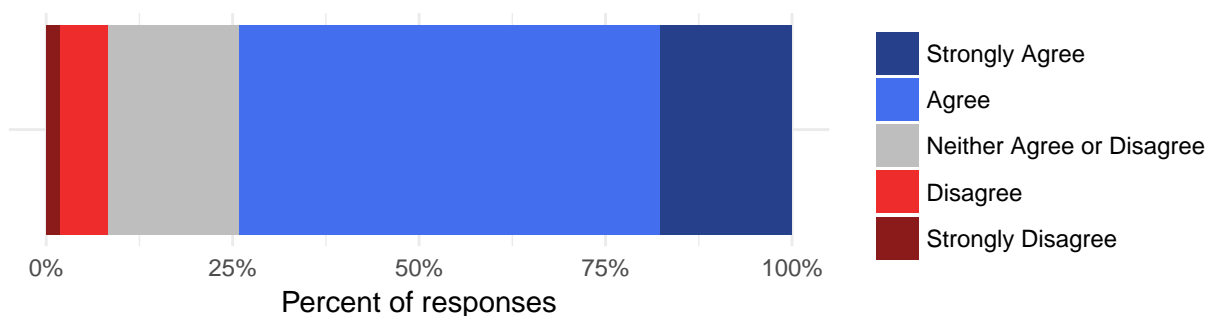
Comments from survey respondents:

- "Growth is essential, it provides confidence and motivation."
- "Growth should be measured on an individual basis not grouped together."
- "Accountability should be all about growth."
- "Invalid testing renders this designation meaningless."
- "Keep up seems negative, you tell someone who is falling behind as a first warning to keep up. On track, you don't have to use up in every phrase."
- "Students with learning disabilities or low IQ who work harder than other students but only show small growth, should be rewarded for hard work and not punished because they aren't growing at a rate equal to the average or above average student."
- "Small steps toward a goal is growth. We all grow at a different pace. Celebrate achievements."
- "As long as data is transparent and helps students and teachers know how to improve and grow. There is no data on KPREP to see how exactly how individual students fared, in what areas of strength or weaknesses. It's too General with just a score to have any real meaning or way to measure/promote growth."
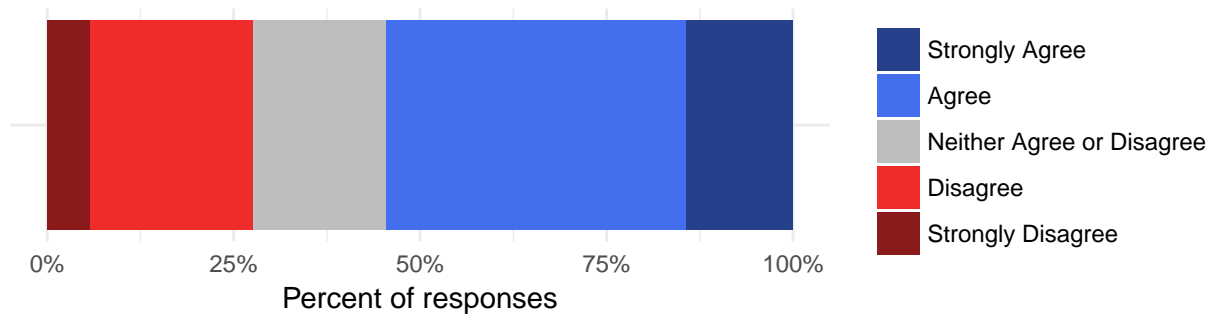
- "Stop labeling our kids. Every kid is different - learns different - peaks differently, etc. If you think these labels don't have an impact on them you're not being honest with yourselves. Or don't care....."

Question 11

Kentucky schools should be expected to improve the proficiency of every student group, every year.

This was the most divisive item on the survey, both in the multiple choice results and through having the most comments of any item. Slightly more than half of respondents agreed with the statement. This item also had the highest proportion of "disagree" responses.

Question 11 – Multiple Choice Results

Legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Percent of responses

On this item, the opinions of teachers and non-teachers diverged more than any other question. Fewer than half of teachers agreed with this item, but around 70% of non-teachers agreed with this item.

Teacher vs. Non–teacher Responses, Question 11
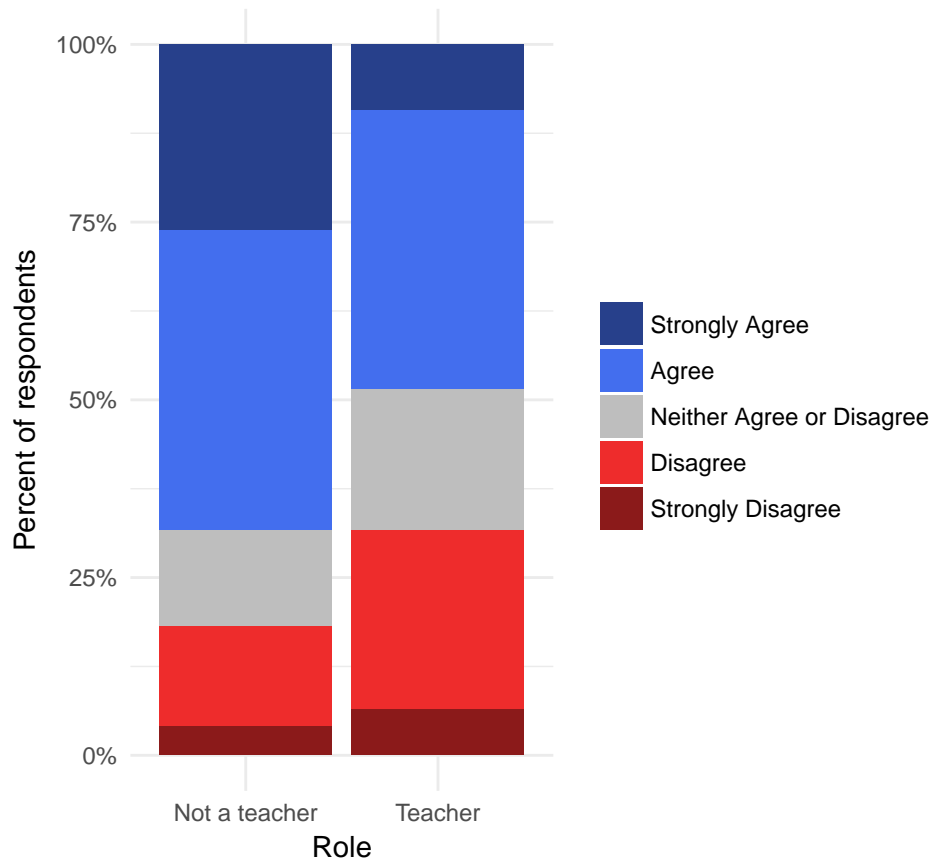
Comments from survey respondents:

- "You are not always going to get continuous improvement between year groups. If a group takes more difficult classes each year and succeeds, that's acceptable. You can't expect the following year's students to always exceed other's students' performance."
- "I agree at some level, but you cannot force proficiency on students who refuse to partake. The same happens for adults in the workplace and they get fired. There needs to be consequences for those who do not put forth effort (i.e. forced to enroll in a school that focuses on their level of growth or technical aspects, removed from a more academically focused high school.)"
- "Sometimes, factors outside of students' and teachers' control can affect the possibility of proficiency during a given school year."
- "All students should grow. Not at the same rate, and not at the same time, though. Not every student will achieve proficiency, but growth is achievable.
- "This is not feasible. Some students are simply not capable. Do lawmakers realize this? Students with disabilities are rarely taken into consideration when these mandates are put into place. It is infuriating."
- "No that's very unrealistic–It may take many years for some and often a few students (very few) won't meet proficiency regardless of our efforts. Reward growth NOT proficiency! Again understand moving a child from below grade level to grade level and novice might have been a huge leap."
- "That's our job."
- "Within reason and with the consideration of special populations."
- "There are certain student groups that will NEVER improve proficiency. This is setting the schools up for failure every year with these groups. It is not realistic."
- "How would a school improve proficiency if all students were proficient or above? All schools should aspire to push their students towards better outcomes each year."

- "Track individuals, not groups"

Question 12

Reporting the disparity between demographic groups in the School Report Card is valuable.

A majority of respondents agreed with this item, but many expressed concerns in the comments. Many urged caution in how groups are compared and noted that student groups are more diverse than how they are defined in the accountability system.

Question 12 – Multiple Choice Results
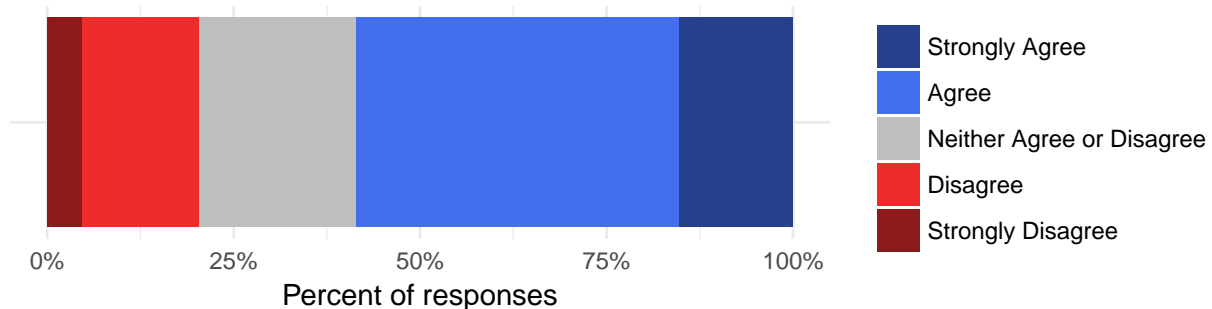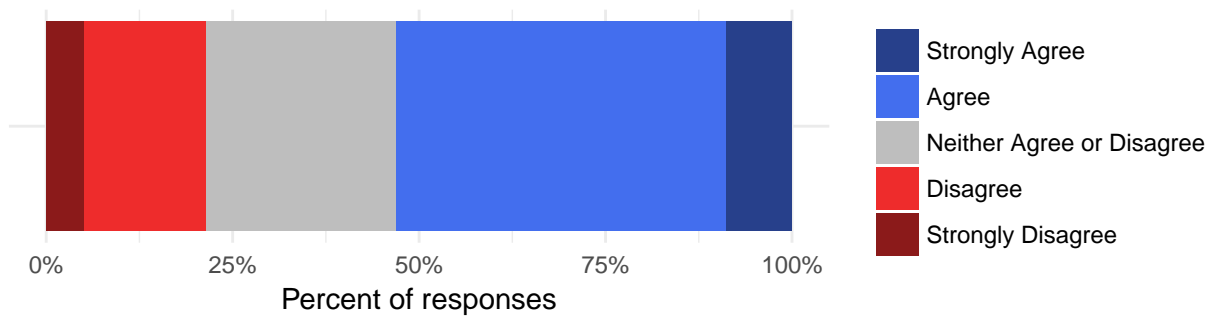

Comments from survey respondents:

- "Not unless there are measures taken to make it more equitable among groups."
- "The difference in demographic groups can be very different even in the same school district. If schools can report the disparity among those groups, it can help determine the level of improvement."
- "I think this can help with understanding students' backgrounds but not what they can achieve academically."
- "Good information to have but not sure about reporting it"
- "It is valuable, and we do need to be aware and address it. But again, we need the resources. This means more staffing, more paraeducators, more space for positive discipline, more ESS funds, smaller class sizes."
- "Much of this is out of the school's control."
- "We are doing the best will all kids, no matter the demographic groups. Let's focus on the positive that unites rather than the disparity that divides."
- "It has value, but it also can be used as a means of labeling/disparaging subgroups."
- "Disparity is interesting, but not representative of the entire picture. High poverty, high ESL or other challenged populations aren't caused by the school system and therefore the schools should not be penalized for the demographic makeup of their student populations."
- "Student populations in the state of Kentucky are not equal. The environment in which children grow up in has a great effect on student learning. People need to be aware of the school population when making judgments about school districts."

Online-Only Question 2

Reporting student outcomes some time at the postsecondary level is an important measure of high school readiness and should be reported even though a school cannot directly control student variables that may impact outcomes.

Respondents were generally strongly either for or against reporting postsecondary outcomes. While some believe this is an important indicator for the future success of students, others believe that it is beyond a school's control and should not be attributed as a reflection of their work.

Question 2 – Multiple Choice Results
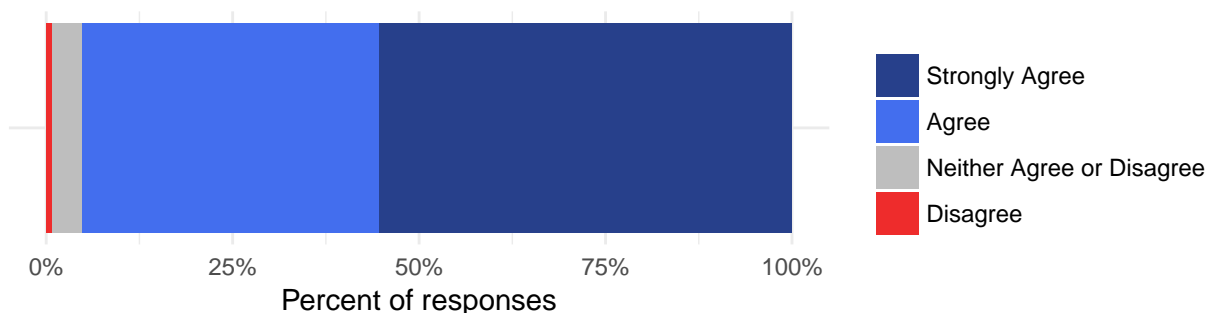

Comments from survey respondents:

- There are too many factors after high school that affect students to be able to put that on their high school's report. This is a crazy suggestion!
- Data beyond the secondary level is vital! Without it we have no true indicators of how well we prepared our students before send them to the post-secondary world.
- Just because a student doesn't go to a four year university institution does not mean that the student was unsuccessful in life. Many college graduates are working minimum wage jobs. We need to get rid of the stigma of vocational/technical school postsecondary.
- Until postsecondary institutions take ownership of their responsibility to students, this is not something that should be reported as a measure for a high school.
- We need to know where we are even if you can't do anything about it.
- Schools should only be accountable for what they can control.
- As challenging as it is, it is a gauge for how well we have prepared them.
- Determining whether a student is career and college ready should be a measure, but the measurement should be based on a national assessment/certification.
- I think it is good to report on it but not to count it as part of the accountability.

Town Hall-Only Question 1

Including school factors beyond test scores in school accountability can promote a well-rounded education and improved student outcomes.

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed with this item.

Question 1 – Multiple Choice Results

Respondents did not have the option to provide question-specific comments on the surveys given at town hall events.